



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE CLASSICAL JOURNAL

VOLUME XV

APRIL 1920

NUMBER 7

Editorial

LATIN AS A TOOL

The last few years have witnessed a marked improvement in methods of teaching Latin. This is due in part to the demand that all high-school subjects be brought to bear directly upon the life of today, and in part to the recognition of the fact that at present most Latin students do not carry the subject beyond the second or the third year.

With the great majority of our pupils enrolled in this short course, it is a manifest duty to make this course well worth while in and for itself, but without impairing its usefulness as a means of preparation for students who intend to carry the subject farther.

At this point a noteworthy contribution has been made in the development of ways and means of correlating the work in Latin and English; and even yet we have not reached the limits of possibility in this direction. It is a feature of the work that merits fullest development; indeed, even under the methods of twenty-five and thirty years ago, very often it was the matter of English etymology that most captivated the student's interest, and made the most vivid and lasting impression upon his mind.

Thus far teachers of Latin have responded worthily to the demands imposed by present-day conditions. But now a new call is beginning to be heard; and, if it is to be heeded in season, there will be need of constructive work of a high order in the near future.

From time to time in various quarters the suggestion has been made in a general way that Latin might fittingly become a universal

medium for the exchange of ideas among scholars. At the present juncture this suggestion is merging into a demand. In the issue for March there will be found a paper on "Latin as a Universal Language" by Professor L. J. Paetow, of the University of California. It is significant that this article is written by a professor of medieval history, at his own instance, and under the stress of a pressing need. History is now being written in such a variety of tongues that the student of history can hardly hope to keep pace with them. Some common medium of communication is imperatively called for, and Professor Paetow finds Latin best suited for the purpose.

Quite recently at Berkeley an informal gathering of men interested in this subject heard Professor Paetow present his views; and while to many of them it seemed too much to expect that Latin could be made a universal language for all walks of life, it was felt very strongly that Latin might well become a world-language for scholars, and that the immediate present is the psychological moment for initiating such a program.

For this new purpose it would be necessary, of course, to devise a new method of Latin instruction for beginners. The standard method, which includes so many features designed to rouse the student's interest and to connect his work in Latin with other departments, but which leaves him at the end of four years with but a halting power to read the language, could hardly be utilized here. The goal is the power to read in the quickest possible way; and with students more mature in thought and more fixed in purpose much time doubtless could be saved. And there would be a stimulus to interest in the very fact that the mastery for which the student is striving is to be put to a concrete practical use.

In this connection a certain interest attaches to a paper read last summer at Berkeley by Professor Lane Cooper. He too is calling for a concise method of teaching the elements of Latin, to the end that the pupil may be introduced more quickly to the masterpieces of the language. He even outlined in some detail the lines along which he thought such a course should be constructed, and set a year as the limit for the acquisition of a considerable reading power.

The call is coming from other quarters also; for example, from the professor of Roman law, who too often looks in vain for students who can read the original sources. Shall we enter this open door, and take to ourselves these new allies, who appeal to us in their pressing need?

After the conference above referred to, one of the participants made the remark that the champions of the classics are hurting their own cause by overmuch attention to defensive tactics, and that the crying need at present is for a forward movement. The entrance of the United States into the late war meant much more than an addition of men and material resources; it had also a psychological influence, changing the cry "Let us save Paris" to "On to Berlin!" May it not be that these new allies will help to bring like inspiration to the classical forces?

This is a large matter, and it needs to be handled in a large way. Scattered efforts will avail little, and success can be assured only through concerted action. It is suggested that the proposal be made a subject for consideration by the various classical associations, the American Classical League, and other organizations interested in the use of Latin.

H. C. N.